1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

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Community Recreation

Were it not for the public holidays and festivals, the family celebrations and informal social gatherings, opportunities for recreation would be very limited. Seeing a Japanese motion picture usually involves going to another village. Young people, especially those studying English, go to American movies in Naha when they can afford it. Many went to see Hamlet when it played there.

A Naha troupe presents plays in the rural villages. These appearances are advertised by a sound truck travelling throughout the countryside. Plays are of two main types: the historical drama and those of domestic life and manners. The historical plays are usually based on the heroic age in Okinawa, and are so filled with episodes and sword play that it is difficult, even for an Okinawan, to follow the plot. All plays are given in Okinawan.

The plot of a play of manners is of more interest, since it is concerned with the conflicts of obligations, duties, and personal desires. One such play, The Chaste Woman and the Dutiful Son, concerns a married couple who have one son. The husband drank too much and went with another woman. The wife objected, the husband tells her he no longer wants her and desires a divorce. The divorce attained, he takes the other woman as a second wife and moves with her to Nago, where he lives. Twenty years after, the second wife becomes ill, and dies, and the husband finds it increasingly difficult to earn a livelihood. The first wife, in the meantime, anxious to bring up her child well, has sent him to school. At the age of 20 he has become a school teacher. The successful young man--becoming a teacher is a great success--marries. The young couple have a child and everyone is happy.

The father in Nago earns a precarious living selling firewood. One day he reads of the success of his son in a newspaper. (This provides the actor with an opportunity for exaggerated astonishment and much staggering around). More soberly, the father decides to visit the first wife and their son. Lack of pride and poverty permits him to do this.

The first wife gives him an angry reception. When he has forced his way into the house, there is a loud quarrel. The successful young school teacher returns home, sees the quarrel, and asks his mother the identity of the man. The mother replies that she does not know him. The son inquires the reason for such a violent quarrel between his mother and a stranger. The mother had previously told her son his father had died. She now says she lied, and in the ensuing revelations, the son weeps a little. The father implores his son to intervene in obtaining the forgiveness of his former wife. But she will not forgive--neither will she forget--and does not want the old man around at all. The son